CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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FINAL RECORD OF THE FIVE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-EIGHTH PLENARY MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Tuesday, 27 February 1990, at 10 a.m.

President: Mr. Hendrik Wagenmakers (Netherlands)

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The PRESIDENT: I declare open the 538th plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament.

At the outset, I should like to extend a warm welcome to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of China, His Excellency Mr. Qian Qichen, who will be addressing the Conference today as first speaker. I should like to underline the fact that the visit of His Excellency the Minister for Foreign Affairs, who is an experienced diplomat, is taking place on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of his country's participation in the work of this multilateral disarmament negotiating forum, China having joined immediately before taking up the chairmanship of the then Committee on Disarmament. The involvement of China in this multilateral disarmament negotiating forum was a significant event, as for the first time all nuclear-weapon States were represented in this body. Since then, China has participated actively in our work, also by appointing some time later a special representative for disarmament matters. I look forward to the statement of His Excellency the Minister for Foreign Affairs today, and I should like to thank him for having decided to visit us to convey the views of his Government in the field of disarmament.

I would also like to extend a special welcome to the Director-General of the United Nations Office at Geneva, Mr. Jan Martenson.

In conformity with its programme of work, the Conference continues today its consideration of agenda items 1, "Nuclear test ban", and 2, "Cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament". However, in accordance with rule 30 of its rules of procedure, any member wishing to do so may raise any subject relevant to the work of the Conference.

As announced at our last plenary meeting, I shall put before the Conference for decision today additional requests from non-members for participation in the work of the Conference. Once the list of speakers is exhausted, I shall convene an informal meeting of the Conference for that purpose.

I have on my list of speakers today His Excellency the Minister for Foreign Affairs of China and the representatives of Yugoslavia, the United States of America and Indonesia. I now give the floor to His Excellency the Minister for Foreign Affairs of China, Mr. Qian Qichen.

Mr. QIAN (China) (translated from Chinese): Mr. President, in the first spring of the 1990s and on the tenth anniversary of China's participation in the work of the Conference on Disarmament, it is a great privilege for me to come to the Palais des Nations and join all my colleagues here who are dedicated to international peace and disarmament in discussing some of the major concerns facing the people of the world. Please allow me to offer my congratulations to you on taking up the presidency of the Conference for this month. I believe that your rich experience and diplomatic skills will help bring about new progress in our work. I would also like to extend my regards to Mr. Jan Martenson, Director-General of the United Nations Office in Geneva, Mr. M. Komatina, Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament, and all the delegations present here.

(Mr. Qian, China)

The 1980s that have just gone by witnessed tremendous changes in the world. While some progress has been made in such areas as relaxation of tension in the military sphere and the disarmament process, rivalry between different forces in the world, big-Power interference in the internal affairs of some countries and the perennial tension and turbulence in some regions with extremely acute complexities cannot but cause concern. Along with the evolution in the international situation, world disarmament has moved ahead somewhat in recent years from its long-standing stagnation, and some preliminary concrete results have been achieved in the disarmament effort. Supported and urged on by hundreds of millions of people, many Governments and organizations have taken an active part in extensive discussion and settlement of disarmament issues, working together to promote progress in disarmament. In their urgent need for peace, security and development, the third world and small and medium-sized countries at large strongly call for a halt to the big-Power arms race. They have put forward many reasonable proposals, including those for the establishment of zones of peace and nuclear-weapon-free zones in many parts of the world. With their practical action, these countries have made an important contribution to the maintenance of peace and stability and to the endeavour towards disarmament.

The United Nations has done a great deal of work in the field of multilateral disarmament. Many positive resolutions and documents on disarmament have been adopted at successive United Nations General Assembly sessions, SSODs, the Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development and the international conferences on chemical weapons. The World Disarmament Campaign sponsored by the United Nations, and many special studies on arms reduction issues, have helped promote the disarmament efforts of all Governments and peoples. The Conference on Disarmament is playing a uniquely important role as the sole global multilateral negotiating body on disarmament and has, in particular, registered noted progress in the negotiations regarding a convention on the prohibition of CW.

One may recall that back in the early 1980s the United States and the Soviet Union continuously escalated the arms race between them and engaged in intense rivalry in many parts of the world. This was criticized and opposed by peoples of all countries, as the tension and confrontation between them constituted a grave threat to world security and stability. At the same time, their incessant arms expansion imposed a heavy burden on them and added to their fiscal and economic difficulties. Against this background, the two super-Powers have made some headway in arms control negotiations over the past few years. After a number of summit meetings and lengthy negotiations, they finally concluded a treaty on the total destruction of their intermediate-range and shorter-range missiles. Their bilateral negotiations on the reduction of strategic nuclear arms and on chemical weapons are gradually moving ahead. The CFE negotiations are also making headway. This is well received by peoples of all countries. It should be noted, however, that the above-mentioned progress is preliminary and limited, that there is still a long way to go as far as disarmament is concerned, and that there are numerous obstacles and difficulties on the way ahead. Even if the United States and the Soviet Union were to cut their strategic nuclear arsenals by half, they would still possess over 90 per cent of all the nuclear weapons in the world, more than enough to destroy the whole of mankind several times over, thus remaining the biggest threat to international security.

(Mr. Qian, China)

Judging from the United States-Soviet negotiations, the strategic warheads each side will retain after the cuts are expected to exceed by far the proclaimed ceiling of 6,000. The actual cut envisaged is therefore far less than 50 per cent. As some key categories of weapons are decoupled or shelved, these negotiations fall short of covering all types of strategic nuclear weapons in the hands of the two sides. With the arms talks focusing mainly on the question of quantity but evading that of quality, the arms race between the two countries has not come to a genuine halt but has turned more to the qualitative aspect. For example, a new generation of ICBMs, SLBMs, strategic bombers and cruise missiles with greater accuracy, penetration and mobility has joined the already enormous strategic nuclear arsenals of the United States and the Soviet Union.

The United States and the Soviet Union are applying the most sophisticated scientific and technological achievements to the development of space weaponry. This will inevitably extend the current arms race on land, at sea and in the air to a new arena - outer space - thereby adding a new threat to the world peace. It should be stressed, in particular, that many of the justified wishes and demands of the third world and small and medium-sized countries on the question of disarmament have not been given due attention. In the eyes of some big Powers, multilateral disarmament efforts seem to be negligible. More often than not, their significance and role are deliberately underestimated. Consequently, in the multilateral field, including this Conference, progress on a number of important disarmament questions is not satisfactory and in some cases has simply stalled. In recent years there have been obvious attempts to shift the pressure onto the third world by exploiting such issues as conventional disarmament and the prevention of nuclear and CW proliferation.

A brief review of the realities in the field of disarmament gives us enough reason to conclude that the world today is neither trouble-free nor tranquil, and that it is no time to sit back and relax. It remains a heavy responsibility for us all to safeguard peace and strive for disarmament. With a view to ensuring a correct orientation for the disarmament process, it is necessary to reaffirm and emphasize the following. The two super-Powers, which possess the largest arsenals, bear a special responsibility for disarmament. They should not only slash the number of their armaments, but also completely stop their qualitative arms race. They should withdraw all their armed forces stationed abroad and remove all their military bases from foreign soil. All United States-Soviet disarmament agreements must contribute to the maintenance of international peace and stability without prejudice to the interests of any third country. The troops designated for reduction should be disbanded and not transferred to any other place. All the weapons and equipment thus cut should be destroyed, dismantled or turned over to civilian purposes, and should not be integrated into other weapon systems or redeployed in other regions.

It is the common aspiration of all countries to reduce armaments and diminish the danger of war. All countries, big or small, strong or weak, enjoy equal rights on the question of security and are entitled to take part in the discussion and settlement of security and disarmament questions.

(Mr. Qian, China)

Disarmament efforts on a bilateral or small-scale basis are welcome. However, they should not replace global scale multilateral disarmament efforts. All these efforts should promote and supplement each other.

It is an important part of China's independent foreign policy of peace to oppose the arms race and strive for disarmament. It is our consistent view that all kinds of arms race, whatever category of weapons it may involve, be it on land or at sea, on Earth or in outer space, should be halted.

Looking into the next decade, we find nuclear disarmament undoubtedly still an issue of paramount importance. China has all along stood for the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons. Experience has shown that to achieve this objective the United States and the Soviet Union, which possess the largest nuclear arsenals, should assume a special responsibility and obligation to take the lead in halting the testing, production and deployment of nuclear weapons and drastically cut all types of nuclear weapons deployed at home and abroad. The tangible progress they make in these fields will create conditions for convening a broadly representative international conference on nuclear disarmament with the participation of all nuclear-weapon States. To this end, we hope that the United States and the Soviet Union will, through negotiations, effectively cut at least 50 per cent of their enormous nuclear arsenals, including sea-launched and air-launched cruise missiles, as well as tactical nuclear weapons, and proceed on this basis to cut their nuclear weapons by a bigger margin. All the nuclear weapons thus cut should be destroyed and the nuclear warheads duly disposed of. The reductions should not be confined merely to the nuclear weapons on their territories and in Europe, but should also include those deployed by them in Asia and the Pacific. This would contribute to peace and security in all regions of the world.

The presence of nuclear weapons in the world, even for a single day, calls for the adoption of measures to prevent nuclear war. The extremely limited number of nuclear weapons China possesses is solely for the purpose of self-defence. We have never shirked our responsibility, and since the very first day that China came into possession of nuclear weapons, we have unilaterally undertaken that at no time and under no circumstances will China be the first to use nuclear weapons. It is our view that if all countries possessing nuclear weapons undertake not to be the first to use nuclear weapons, that in itself will be a highly effective measure for the prevention of nuclear war and a powerful impetus to the nuclear disarmament process. China hereby proposes that negotiations should be started at the earliest date in the Conference on Disarmament for the conclusion of an international agreement banning the first use of nuclear weapons under agenda item 3, "Prevention of nuclear war".

In the current international circumstances, China holds that it is high time to consider another important measure for the prevention of nuclear war: all nuclear-weapon States that have deployed nuclear weapons abroad, particularly the United States and the Soviet Union, should pull back all these weapons to their own territories. It is obvious that this measure, once taken, will not only help enhance trust among nations and reduce the risk of nuclear war, but also promote international efforts towards the prevention of nuclear proliferation.

(Mr. Qian, China)

For the purpose of maintaining world peace and promoting the security of all nations, China does not advocate, encourage or engage in nuclear proliferation. In its co-operation with other countries in the field of peaceful uses of nuclear energy China has adopted a responsible attitude, requiring the recipient countries of its nuclear exports to accept IAEA safeguards and ensuring that its own nuclear imports are for peaceful purposes. At the same time, we are opposed to the practice of going all out for the nuclear arms race in both quantity and quality while imposing unreasonable restrictions on international co-operation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy under the pretext of preventing nuclear proliferation. In 1988 the Chinese Government signed a unilateral submission agreement with IAEA to place a part of its nuclear energy installations under the Agency's safeguards. We are now giving favourable consideration to sending an observer delegation to the Fourth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, which is scheduled for this August.

China understands the urgent desire of the third world countries and the non-nuclear-weapon States for a comprehensive nuclear test ban at an early date. It has always exercised the utmost restraint and prudence towards nuclear tests, and has conducted only a very limited number of such tests. We will continue to do so in the future. It is our position that the objective of a comprehensive nuclear test ban should be reached in the context of an effective nuclear disarmament process. The United States and the Soviet Union have conducted the most nuclear tests, amounting to about 1,600 to date. Therefore, they have the obligation to take the lead in halting all nuclear tests and carrying out nuclear disarmament so as to create conditions for a comprehensive ban on nuclear tests. The Chinese delegation is ready to join in the work of the ad hoc committee on a nuclear test ban as soon as it is established by the CD. The Chinese departments concerned and experts are studying the technical aspects of the international seismological data exchange experiment, and positively considering participation in it, so as to accumulate experience for the future establishment of an effective international verification mechanism for a comprehensive nuclear test ban.

China has held all along that, in parallel to nuclear disarmament, great importance should be attached to conventional disarmament. In the process of conventional disarmament, countries that possess the largest conventional arsenals should assume a special responsibility. The early conclusion of an agreement between them and other member States of the two major military alliances on drastic conventional force reductions will contribute to peace and security in Europe and the world as a whole. Meanwhile, all countries should be encouraged to make greater efforts and take concrete steps to advance conventional disarmament to the extent that their security and necessary defence capabilities are guaranteed.

For years China has worked for conventional disarmament by taking concrete actions. From 1985 to 1987 China unilaterally cut the size of its troops by 1 million. In terms of the number of troops, this was the largest disarmament move the world witnessed in the 1980s. China's military expenditure has all along been kept at a very low level. For example, its defence budget for 1989 was 24,550 million yuan renminbi, accounting for 8.4 per cent of its government budget and less than 2 per cent of its GNP for

(Mr. Qian, China)

the year. China's annual per capita military expenditure is less than 5 United States dollars, a figure not only lower than that of any of the big countries in the world but also lower than that of many small countries.

China has never set up any military base or stationed any soldiers outside its territory. It has always opposed the stationing of troops and the establishment of military bases abroad by any country. Now it is high time to drastically reduce and ultimately completely remove all troops stationed, military bases established and all types of weapons deployed on foreign soil. Not long ago an armed invasion of Panama was launched. This act of aggression has drawn condemnation from people throughout the world. We hold that all foreign aggressor troops and armies of occupation anywhere in the world should be withdrawn immediately without any pre-conditions.

Progress in nuclear and conventional disarmament has made disarmament in outer space and at sea an increasingly prominent issue. China holds that all countries with space capabilities, especially the major Powers in this field, should take prompt measures to prevent and halt the arms race in outer space, starting with the complete prohibition of space weapons. The existing international legal instruments relating to outer space, notwithstanding their positive role, are far from adequate to prevent weapons from entering outer space. We therefore support negotiations at the Conference on Disarmament for the early conclusion of an international agreement to ensure a weapon-free outer space.

The naval arms race between the super-Powers not only involves nuclear and conventional weapons but also affects the peace in seas and oceans, as well as global security and stability. Even today, the spectre of the anachronistic "gunboat policy" still menaces some small and medium-sized countries from time to time. Therefore, in the process of disarmament one cannot but devote attention to naval arms reductions. It is our view that the United States and the Soviet Union should stop their naval arms expansion forthwith and substantially reduce their navies.

China, as a non-chemical-weapon State that has historically suffered immensely from the scourge of chemical weapons, has consistently stood for the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of CW and the early conclusion of a convention to this effect, so that the world will be genuinely free from chemical weapons. This year and the next will be of vital importance to the negotiations for a convention on the complete prohibition of chemical weapons. The United States and the Soviet Union have now indicated their intention to cut their chemical weapons by a big margin. This is a welcome development. In our view the key to the final solution of the problem of chemical weapons lies in the total destruction of existing chemical weapons at the earliest date by the countries possessing the largest chemical arsenals, and moreover in their refraining from producing or developing new types of chemical weapons.

With regard to the verification régime in the future convention on CW, our basic position is that we are in favour of an effective, reasonable and feasible verification régime under the convention, including challenge inspection. In the mean time we maintain that challenge inspection should not go beyond the purposes, objectives and scope of the convention, and that its

(Mr. Qian, China)

possible abuse must be strictly guarded against. Specific provisions should ensure a balance between the rights and obligations of the requesting State on the one hand and those of the requested State on the other, and give full play to the role of the future organization.

China has always had a prudent and responsible approach to the export of weapons, and the volume of such exports is extremely limited. In this connection, the principles we strictly follow are: Firstly, such exports should be conducive to the strengthening of the legitimate defence capabilities of the countries concerned. Secondly, they should be conducive to the maintenance and promotion of peace, security and stability in the regions concerned. Thirdly, the export of weapons is not to be used as a means to interfere in other countries' internal affairs. We hope that other countries will follow the same principles in arms exports and in particular impose a strict ban on all forms of arms transfers to those countries or régimes that perpetrate aggression and expansion against or military occupation of other countries or practise apartheid or colonial rule. We are in favour of reasonable regulation and restriction of international arms transfers. If the United States, the Soviet Union and some NATO and Warsaw Treaty countries whose arms transfers account for over 90 per cent of the world total can take concrete and effective measures of self-restraint, they will undoubtedly contribute to the enhancement of world peace and security.

The Chinese Government attaches importance to the relationship between disarmament and development. China started early in the conversion of military industries on a large scale, which has since yielded rapid and significant results. It is part and parcel of China's national development strategy to use its military technologies and capabilities for peaceful purposes and to incorporate its military industrial capacity in a planned way into national economic development. In the 10 years since 1979, China has allocated substantial development funds to military enterprises for the purpose of improving their technological conversion to civilian production and transferring military technologies to the civilan sector. As a result, new civilian products have increased to the tune of 11 billion yuan renminbi in terms of total annual output value. In 1979, the output value of civilian products accounted for 8.1 per cent of the gross output value of military enterprises in China; today the figure is two thirds. Research and production departments in military industries are engaged in active research on key State civilian projects and the production of capital equipment, and are energetically assisting major State development industries such as energy, transport, etc. They have not only supplied many urgently needed products for national economic development and solved numerous technical problems, but also produced a large number of light industrial products and other consumer goods, thus boosting the domestic market. A total of nearly 30,000 items resulting from scientific and technological innovations used exclusively for military purposes in the past are now open to civilian uses. Our experience shows that conversion and development through disarmament are both realistic and practical. We will continue to move in this direction, and we are ready to exchange experience with other countries and jointly explore ways and means of converting military technologies and capabilities.

(Mr. Qian, China)

People throughout the world want peace, not war - relaxation, not tension - stability, not turbulence. Though closely linked with peace, disarmament alone is not sufficient to guarantee peace. In the past few years the military confrontation between the super-Powers has eased, and there has been a growing tendency towards seeking political settlement of regional conflicts through dialogue by the parties concerned. This is a welcome development. However, in reality, the international situation remains tense and turbulent. What particularly merits the attention of the international community is that in inter-State relations there are still frequent cases of interference in other countries' internal affairs by political, economic, cultural and ideological means, pushing peaceful evolution in other countries or even imposing one's own will on other countries by force. Hegemonism and power politics, though repeatedly rebuffed, stubbornly refuse to quit the historical scene. The sovereignty, independence and security of many countries, small and weak countries in particular, are still subject to serious threats. There will be no tranquility in the world if this issue remains unsettled. Likewise, the question of development, which cannot be separated from that of peace, deserves the serious concern of the international community. The unjust international economic order has led to a worsening economic situation in numerous developing countries, as evidenced by heavier debt burdens, reversed financial flows to the developed countries and the widening North-South gap in terms of economic well-being. Failure to solve these problems is detrimental to world peace, security and stability.

The world is a complex one. Recent critics have often described the complex and fluid world situation as bewildering. However, looking beneath the kaleidoscopic surface, one can see clearly that the people of all countries strongly aspire to peace and development. In the final analysis, world peace is indivisible, and security in each region and country is equally important. Safeguarding global security and ensuring the progress of all countries are the most important goals in the 1990s and indeed in the twenty-first century. To attain this goal, it is imperative in international relations to abide universally by the five principles of mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, mutual non-aggression, non-interference in each other's internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit, and peaceful co-existence. On this basis it is essential to establish a just and rational new international political and economic order that conforms to the fundamental interests of all countries. This is the way to safeguard world peace and the security of all countries effectively and provide a solid foundation for the cause of disarmament.

China is a socialist country, and a developing country as well. It always pursues an independent foreign policy of peace, and is unswervingly carrying out a policy of reform and opening up. The Chinese people, who underwent untold sufferings as a result of foreign aggression and the scourge of war in the past, are today working hard for the socialist modernization of their country. To achieve this goal will require the arduous efforts of several generations and a lasting peaceful international environment.

The 1990s will be a decade of opportunities and challenges and of hopes and dangers, all existing side by side. Despite the twists and turns on our road of advance, we are convinced that through the unremitting joint efforts of all Governments and peoples, peace can be preserved, and that the prospects for mankind will be bright.

The PRESIDENT: I thank His Exellency the Minister for Foreign Affairs of China for his important statement and for the kind words that he addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the representative of Yugoslavia, Ambassador Kosin.

Mr. KOSIN (Yugoslavia): Mr. President, allow me to congratulate you on the excellent work you have accomplished as President of the Conference for the current month. The ampleness of successful consultations you have undertaken to secure progress in our deliberations has made it possible for the Conference to engage, from the very beginning, in essential work. I also thank the distinguished Ambassador El Ghali Benhima of Morocco for so efficiently presiding over the Conference during a very active August and the inter-sessional period. In addition, I congratulate His Excellency Mr. Qian Qichen, the Foreign Minister of the People's Republic of China, for his comprehensive and very thoughtful statement to our Conference.

I would like to welcome among us our colleagues who have arrived since my last statement to the Conference: Ambassador Warnasena Rasaputram of Sri Lanka, Ambassador Thomas Ariba Ogada of Kenya, Ambassador Andrea Negrotto Cambiaso of Italy, Ambassador José Pérez Novoa of Cuba, Ambassador Hou Zhitong of China, Ambassador Mitsuro Donowaki of Japan, Ambassador Gerald Shannon of Canada, Ambassador Roberto García Moritán of Argentina, Ambassador Horacio Arteaga of Venezuela, Ambassador Stephen Ledogar of the United States of America and Ambassador Miguel Marín Bosch of Mexico. I would like to assure them of my delegation's active co-operation.

I wish to bid farewell to Ambassador Taylhardat, Ambassador Marchand, Ambassador Friedersdorf, Ambasaddor Dolgu, Ambassador Vajnar, Ambassador García Robles. Our delegation expresses to all of them our best wishes for the future. I would like to take advantage of this occasion and once again recall how much we owe to Don Alfonso, whose interests and achievements in the field of disarmament have been highly acclaimed. My delegation would like to pay homage to his unyielding commitment to disarmament objectives.

We join other delegations in the deep sorrow for the premature loss of Miss Annie Rebuzzi, and kindly ask the Secretariat to transmit to her parents our sincerest condolences.

In terms of time we are on the threshold of the last decade of this century while, in essence, we are perhaps at the beginning of a new era in which many of the postulates of international relations are being challenged. We may have different views as to how to assess this stage of development, in many ways a dramatic one. The least we could say is that disarmament is playing an increasingly active role not only in shaping the security order or influencing the resolution of key world issues, but also in the emergence of a new concept of international relations.

On a more concrete level, we are entering a year with more well-founded expectations for a movement from arms control to genuine disarmament, with clearer stands as to the goals of negotiations, with more specific proposals as to the means of their accomplishment, and a more precise time framework as regards the conclusion of the three most important negotiating undertakings.

(Mr. Kosin, Yugoslavia)

I am referring to the strategic arms reduction treaty (START), the reduction of troops and arms in Europe and the conclusion of the convention on the prohibition of chemical weapons and their destruction.

These somewhat more optimistic expectations stem from the profound changes in social and international relations in the past year, in many ways giving a particular character to post-war development in the world. Without going deep into the essence of these processes, we can say that they have already been reflected in the easing and removal of various barriers between nations and States, barriers which were becoming ever more artificial, intolerable and unacceptable. A series of political events gave strong impetus to the understanding and strengthening of these positive trends.

The ninth summit of heads of State or Government of non-aligned countries evolved in this atmosphere. This highly representative gathering noted that the positive global trends in the world were creating favourable conditions for reaching a consensus on a break with the arms race, competition between blocs, subjugation of nations, racial discrimination and the violation of human rights, instigation of regional conflicts, monopolization of security negotiations, and so forth. At the same time, it voiced firm demands for a global resolution of disarmament, security, economic development and other crucial world issues, with the participation of the entire international community. What we are witnessing today is actually a confirmation of the anticipated concepts of the policy of non-alignment in a more unified and more interdependent international community. The summit focused on all aspects of disarmament, starting from the urgent task of delivering the world from nuclear danger by way of nuclear disarmament. In this context it gave strong support to the Conference on Disarmament as the only multilateral negotiating forum. The summit also stated that disarmament prospects should be constantly broadened and that all countries should have an adequate opportunity in negotiations. It strongly expressed the readiness of non-aligned countries to take upon themselves their share of responsibility.

Of particular importance were the numerous summit and ministerial meetings between the United States and the USSR, which renewed their commitment towards disarmament and their intention of making this year a year of tangible achievements.

As a European non-aligned country we are particularly encouraged by the evolution of facts, events and ideas on our continent. Yugoslavia invested 30 years of efforts in overcoming the bloc-based and other divisions on European soil and embedding into European relations principles which are now being confirmed as the foundations of the inter-European and broader international system. Together with the non-aligned and neutral countries, Yugoslavia made an acknowledged contribution to the development of the concept of confidence-building and security-building measures in Europe. We are convinced that the present socio-political and economic evolution is creating favourable conditions not only for improving East-West relations but also for Europe's decisive contribution to the global security of all countries as a co-operative démarche. Despite numerous old and new contradictions, Europe has taken the road of gradually increasing mutual security and economic political co-operation.

(Mr. Kosin, Yugoslavia)

This positive evolution, which has not yet spread to all the regions or covered all key issues, is giving birth to a new concept of international security and stability. The role of the military element is declining and economic and humanitarian factors are gaining ground. This is creating favourable conditions for disarmament and challenging military-strategic doctrines based on the arms race.

Promising prospects in bilateral and regional negotiations in Europe should not diminish but, on the contrary, strengthen the role of our Conference. Our effort here is much more than a mere confirmation of collective responsibility in solving the problems of disarmament and security. With no intention of drawing artificial lines between different negotiating methods and forums, we see multilateralism as a complementary, but also as an inevitable process in the overall efforts without which no security order can be either stable or permanent. Besides, the most important issues in the field of disarmament simply cannot be dealt with only in the framework of strategic stability among the most powerful countries as a substitute for security for all. This is why we are striving to ensure that the substantive work of the Conference embraces all disarmament issues. This work will clearly vary depending on the readiness of certain issues to be resolved. In order to meet its goals fully and use all its potentialities, the Conference must engage in a profound and critical examination of the ways in which it is fulfilling its role, including its agenda, organization and functioning, with a speedier adjustment to the changes outside the Conference.

Without neglecting any of the issues, in the immediate future we see three priority areas on which our efforts should be focused. I would begin with the convention on the prohibition of chemical weapons as a most immediately attainable task. Its accomplishment would give our Conference, and the multilateral negotiations as well, unparalleled impetus. In this domain the Conference is, in many ways, doing a pioneer's job in creating a new model of international co-operation and communication in the scientific, technical, legal, political, economic and, of course, security fields.

As regards the work before us, we believe that the following are the key points. First, international political consensus has been significantly strengthened, together with an explicit pledge regarding the conclusion of a comprehensive convention as soon as possible. This was the outcome of the Conference in Paris, the United Nations resolutions, the ninth summit of the non-aligned countries, the bilateral contacts between the two biggest chemical weapons possessors, the talks with chemical industry representatives in Canberra, etc.

Second, there has been a fundamental rapproachment of views on the relativity of the military efficiency of chemical weapons. We have proof of this in agreements on the destruction of the bulk of the two big Powers' stockpiles, as well as the ever-increasing recognition that the possession of chemical weapons offers only an illusion of security.

Third, we are in the process of a continuous covergence of views on many important technical and political issues, including the essential verification aspects. It may be said that we now have an outline of the structure of the convention, and that even for more important controversial issues we can discern an infrastructure of political convergence.

(Mr. Kosin, Yugoslavia)

Fourth, international conditions for accelerating negotiations have never been so favourable, as is demonstrated by the parallel negotiations on strategic, nuclear and conventional disarmament which are entering their final stage.

Fifth, from what is known of the degree of agreement in the American-Soviet bilateral negotiations, they can represent a significant impulse. We expect it to be directly reflected at the Conference on Disarmament. We also hope to get more fundamental information, in particular on all aspects connected with the elimination of all stocks of chemical weapons. These weapons must be permanently eliminated and their legalization cannot be accepted on any pretext, least of all through unilateral withdrawal from the convention.

We do not underestimate the difficulties and differences when speaking of such matters as verification, inspection (in particular challenge inspection), technological co-operation, the composition and method of decision-making of the Executive Council, etc. We are not neglecting the complexity of these difficulties, but we believe they can be solved quickly if we keep in mind the high level of political accord reached on basic aspects. We have in mind, above all, the fact that an effective verification system is taking shape, be it a question of routine inspection or ad hoc verification of chemical facilities. The development of the challenge inspection procedure and the verification of CW destruction has progressed well. In dealing with the inspection issues as a whole, it is essential to commence with the common interest of all States parties in establishing the facts by way of inspection, while the rest is logically a matter of the functioning of the mechanism which should ensure consistent implementation of the convention. One of the most important tasks is to provide for a complete ban on the use of chemical weapons during the 10-year transitional period following the entry into force of the convention. We regret that, although strongly reiterated in the Paris Declaration, the question of the prohibition of use has not been introduced in the mandate of the Ad hoc Committee.

The composition of the Executive Council and the decision-making process in it are among the important unresolved and, as yet, least elaborated questions. It seems that the starting-point for solving these questions should be that the implementation of the convention will presuppose full co-operation on the part of the Executive Council with all the States parties, which underlines its operational and co-ordinative role. We think it also important to establish adequate communication with the United Nations.

Of great concern, however, is the fact that the problem of the security of non-aligned and under-developed countries, especially when dealing with technological co-operation and assistance in the event of the use or threat of use of chemical weapons, is not being given sufficient attention. It is not necessary to keep on proving that countries which do not possess chemical weapons, or have renounced them, will for a long time be in an unequal economic and security position. To solve these issues it is essential to state the principles of co-operation and solidarity. Universal accession to the convention can be achieved only if it becomes a truly multilateral instrument that respects the quality of all its members, with an efficient and cost-effective implementation mechanism.

(Mr. Kosin, Yugoslavia)

Certain reservations already expressed as to the possibility that not all States will become parties to the convention seem somewhat premature - all the more so as this is the very purpose of the general endeavours of the Conference, including the participation of non-member States. A proposal still on the table concerning universal accession to the convention is that offered by the Federal Secretary for Foreign Affairs of Yugoslavia at SSOD-III for the convening of an international conference under the auspices of the United Nations.

We do not want to underestimate the proliferation issue, but we hold the strong conviction that it can be solved only by the conclusion of a convention which would meet the needs of all countries.

We are of the opinion that conditions to accelerate the otherwise slow negotiations are improving. Therefore, besides a political decision, we need to focus on those problems which our Conference must and should resolve, and leave the other to organs yet to be created. The Committee, under the expert and dynamic leadership of Ambassador Morel, has gone a long way in clarifying many issues. We believe that as of now we could fix a time frame for the conclusion of the convention which would significantly stimulate the negotiations that have been going on for too long now. We are fully confident that Ambassador Hyltenius, with his knowledge and experience, will do all he can to have the controversial issues resolved as soon as possible.

My delegation attaches high priority to the issue of nuclear tests. We support the positive efforts being made in bilateral negotiations, which should evolve towards a comprehensive agreement. We are, however, of the view that without a total nuclear test ban the nuclear arms race would be nurtured even by tests on the lowest level. We are firmly in favour of more active involvement by the Conference on this issue by way of the establishment of an Ad hoc Committee. The proposal for the convening of a conference to amend the PTBT is an indispensable effort towards joint action by the international community. We must always keep in mind that constructive dealing with this issue strengthens the non-proliferation régime. Any marginalization of Conference activities on nuclear issues is unacceptable, nuclear disarmament having by its very definition a universal character. Also, we cannot neglect the fact that the proliferation of missile technology, which we are increasingly being warned about, is primarily an important component of the nuclear arms race. It is now being acknowledged that in order to solve these issues, multilateral efforts are indispensable and hence require the strengthening of the role of the Conference on Disarmament.

It is commonplace to say that outer space is the heritage of all mankind. It must therefore remain a domain for exclusively peaceful co-operation which is of invaluable benefit to all countries. This is why it is of vital importance to disarmament, to economic development and to scientific progress to prevent an arms race in outer space. To date the Conference has performed useful work on identifying and clarifying the various aspects of this complex item. It has before it numerous proposals aimed at supplementing and elaborating upon the existing legal régime, which should continually be strengthened. The Conference must urgently fulfil its role in the elaboration of new instruments of a legal character which would, in an

(Mr. Kosin, Yugoslavia)

all-embracing and multilateral way, tackle the issue of the non-militarization of outer space. The Conference cannot renounce pursuit of the achievement of meaningful measures in the search for effective solutions. That there should be a timely reaction to this can be seen from the statement made in the plenary of the Conference that United States-Soviet bilateral negotiations are "based upon a mutual recognition that there is no absolute weapon - offensive or defensive". This clearly indicates the negative consequences of deployment of any weapons in outer space. This is also recognized to be an urgent issue, as an increasing number of countries are becoming technologically capable of conquering outer space, in which only military activity aimed at verifying disarmament treaties could be useful. The urgent elaboration of a system of confidence-building measures would clear the way for essential steps towards preventing the arms race.

Instead of a conclusion, I would like to underline that we should be cautious with easy-handed prophecies. We can certainly discern on the horizon the contours of new approaches to the political and security order, but we cannot underestimate the contradictions that can make this evolution fragile. We should not overlook the fact that a key area of the qualitative arms race still remains untouched: how to monitor, through co-operation, the use of new armaments-oriented technologies. We must also keep in mind that the most important global economic, socio-humanitarian, ecological and other issues have hardly been tackled.

It is clear that what is happening today is much more than détente in East-West relations. The changes are much deeper and more all-embracing. The movement towards a peaceful world has been speeded up, yet all the roads leading to a stable global structure have not been cleared. The changes in the world are still asymmetrical and lessons have so far been drawn unevenly from our experience. The results achieved are only a beginning. Nevertheless, prospects for faster and greater breakthroughs here at this Conference are more real. This is why we should commence this year not only with new expectations but also with renewed efforts towards more daring achievements. We can accomplish this if the positive evolution of East-West relations is spread to all fields of international life, all issues, all countries. It is precisely in this respect that there still remains a series of dilemmas stemming primarily from the North-South gap in development, generating deeper inequalities. Without the resolution of this problem there can be no stability in the world.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Yugoslavia for his statement and for the kind words he addressed to me. I now give the floor to the representative of the United States of America, Ambassador Ledogar.

Mr. LEDOGAR (United States of America): First, let me express my deep appreciation for the gracious welcome members of this group have given to me. It gives me added encouragement about the prospect for accelerating progress in our work. I was honoured by President Bush's appointment to represent the United States at this Conference, and I am pleased to be here. I look forward to working closely and co-operatively with you on the many issues we have before us.

(Mr. Ledogar, United States)

Mr. President, as the first order of business in my first formal statement to the Conference, I would like to join those who have already congratulated you upon your assumption of the presidency during this important first month of our 1990 session, and I extend best wishes to you in your new capacity as the CD representative of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. Under your able leadership we have gotten off to a smooth start. The United States delegation assures you of its continued support and co-operation.

May I also express the appreciation of my delegation for the visit here today of Chinese Foreign Minister Qian Qichen? We have carefully noted the various points the Minister made, any advice he gave to us and to others in his most interesting intervention.

Since the CD concluded its 1989 session, the pace of arms control and disarmament negotiations has quickened at all levels - bilateral, regional, and multilateral. Secretary of State James Baker and Soviet Foreign Minister, Eduard Shevardnadze have met several times. These meetings have produced agreement on a number of arms control issues that we hope will help pave the way for progress on many fronts. Activities have not been limited, however, to bilateral meetings. Recently in Vienna the NATO countries have tabled yet again a series of new proposals to expedite early agreement on conventional force reductions in Europe. Also in the Vienna negotiations on confidence- and security-building measures, military leaders of the European countries, United States and Canada, have concluded earlier this month an unprecedented exchange of views on military doctrine, including on force structure, and military training. In Ottawa, the 23 countries of NATO and the Warsaw Treaty Organization have come together to begin consideration of modalities for opening their skies to reciprocal, unarmed aerial surveillance flights, conducted on a routine basis - another great step towards increased openness and transparency. And in our own area, last September the Canberra Government-Industry Conference against Chemical Weapons brought together for the first time large numbers of government officials and chemical industry representatives.

As many speakers before me at this session have already noted, we are living in a time of profound change and opportunity. In our Conference, we have new possibilities to consolidate change and transition to a more peaceful world. It is our responsibility to seize these opportunities and make the most of them, and - if we can - to undertake new, binding commitments that can enhance global stability and security.

There are, of course, still disturbing trends. My Government, for example, is deeply concerned at the current proliferation of technologies that threaten peace and can lead to regional instabilities. We still have much to do. The Conference on Disarmament, as a multilateral negotiating body with representation from all regions of the globe, must continue to play its vital role.

Among the issues on the CD's agenda, the negotiation on a comprehensive, multilateral chemical weapons convention is a particularly high priority for the United States and others. President Bush is personally committed to the achievement of a chemical weapons convention at the earliest date, and you are

(Mr. Ledogar, United States)

aware of the intense interest of the United States Congress as well. The United States has taken pioneering steps in the past on chemical weapons, presenting a draft treaty in this body in 1984, proposing mandatory challenge inspection, and releasing extensive information on the composition and location of United States CW stockpiles and production facilities.

Without in the least slighting the other important work of this Conference, I wish today in accord with rule 30 to address the CW issue as it appears from the United States' perspective. I look forward to addressing other issues on our agenda in a subsequent statement.

Since arriving in Geneva, I have heard recurrent criticism of the slow pace of work on the chemical weapons convention. Some say the political commitment made at Paris and Canberra last year has not been matched by efforts to resolve the remaining issues on a CW ban.

There may be some measure of short-term truth to this criticism, but for the most part it is a gross exaggeration. I think that many of us are so engrossed in our work that we are not seeing the forest for the trees. The scope and technical and political complexity of this convention are unprecedented. Many of the issues now before us are the difficult ones set aside in the past in favour of dealing with the more readily soluble issues.

It is easy to see just the trees - the sheer weight of detailed work needed to formulate the CW convention. We have to stand back to see the forest - that is, how far we have already come. We must not let political haste to get a convention lessen our commitment to a convention that will truly enhance security and that will work in practice. Our success won't be judged by how quickly we reach agreement but whether our legislatures and our people decide their national security interests have been met, and whether the treaty can be effectively implemented and verified.

The firm commitment of the United States to a multilateral, effectively verifiable CW convention has taken several forms. A very important one is our work with the USSR.

Convinced that greater openness can contribute to the prospects for an early multilateral convention, the United States and Soviet Union signed a memorandum of understanding in Wyoming in September 1989 regarding a bilateral verification experiment and data exchange. These significant steps will occur in two phases. Phase one, already under way, involves the exchange of general data on each side's chemical weapons capabilities and a series of visits to relevant military and civil facilities on our respective territories. The initial exchange took place on 29 December 1989. In phase two the sides will exchange more detailed data and permit on-site inspections to verify the accuracy of the information exchanged.

In addition to the increased confidence gained from such exchanges of data, visits and inspections, we believe the inspection experience gained, drawing largely on multilateral provisions elaborated to date in the "rolling text", will contribute much to our work here in the CD as we further elaborate and finalize such provisions for the convention.

(Mr. Ledogar, United States)

The sides also agreed in Wyoming to undertake a co-operative effort with respect to the destruction of chemical weapons. We agreed to reciprocal visits to monitor destruction operations of each other's side, and to the exchange of information on past, current and planned destruction activities and procedures.

To facilitate the entry into force of the convention at the earliest possible date, President Bush proposed in his 25 September United Nations speech that the United States and the Soviet Union begin to destroy a major portion of their CW stocks even before the convention enters into force. We believe this commitment would give an impetus to rapid completion of the convention. In this connection, I am pleased to be able to inform my colleagues that the United States, in a unilateral action completed just a few weeks ago, has now destroyed its entire stockpile of the incapacitating chemical weapon BZ. I will be providing more detail on this destruction later.

The United States no longer insists that all CW-capable States be parties to the convention from the beginning. Provided the Soviet Union is party to the convention, the United States will become a party at the outset. By year 8, we will have destroyed down to 2 per cent - that is, down to one forty-ninth - of our current stockpile. I want to emphasize and to make clear to the experts here that President Bush's proposal will require significantly faster and deeper United States and Soviet cuts than currently envisioned in the draft convention text.

The United States would destroy the remaining 2 per cent by year 10 of the convention provided that all CW-capable States have become parties.

There is already broad agreement in this body that to be effective a CW convention must include all States of concern. Our proposal is an effort to address this issue in a way that does not delay entry into force of the convention.

The 2 per cent residual is intended to provide an incentive to hold-out States to become parties to the convention. All States that join the convention must do their utmost to bring pressure to bear on any CW-capable States that remain outside.

We have already made substantial progress in implementing aspects of President Bush's initiative. Recently, the United States and Soviet Union agreed at the ministerial in Moscow to work out a bilateral agreement on reciprocal obligations pending the international convention including, inter alia, the destruction of the bulk of our CW stocks to equal low levels. The objective is to complete and sign such an agreement at the June 1990 Bush-Gorbachev summit meeting.

Incidentally, all of the United States-USSR documents I have cited have been presented by both our delegations in the English and Russian versions for circulation by the secretariat as CD documents.

The United States and the Soviet Union just last week began another round of bilateral discussions, which are concentrating on preparing the agreement for the June summit meeting and on implementation of the Wyoming memorandum of understanding.

(Mr. Ledogar, United States)

The United States shares the concern of many delegations about ensuring undiminished security during the period of transition to a world in which such chemical weapons no longer exist. We believe that the security concerns of all CD participants with regard to this period, as well as after, must be met in order to achieve the universality we seek.

In this regard, it is essential that States be just as candid about their own chemical weapons capabilities as they are quick to criticize those who admit to having them.

The way we see it, there is good news and bad news. There are more than 20 States that have or are seeking chemical weapons. The bad news is that only two States - the United States and USSR - have admitted to having a chemical weapon programme or capability, and some States have even falsely denied it. The good news is that a large number of delegations from States with CW programmes or intentions are present here in this room today and are participating in the CW negotiations, and thus have an opportunity to make a concrete contribution to progress. Here I address myself to the co-ordinators of the regional groups that represent more than 20 chemical-weapon-capable States here in this chamber. When they feel the need to give advice in the name of their groups to the United States and, I imagine, also to the Soviet Union, they should bear in mind, as we do, that they speak also on behalf of at least several CW-capable States.

In addition to the issue of undiminished security, the programme of work for 1990 outlined by the Chairman of the CW Ad hoc Committee lays before us a number of other very important technical and political issues. My delegation will actively participate in the attempt to find solutions to these issues as well.

Work will be taken up on procedures to investigate alleged use, provisions for ad hoc verification and guidelines for initial inspections. With regard to verification of alleged use, Canada and Norway, as well as the United Nations Secretary-General's expert group, have done much good work on this issue. The United States is pleased to hear of both the interest expressed in an ad hoc verification régime and the desire to take up this issue soon. We hope to provide the Conference with a proposal to break the deadlock on this subject in the very near future. With regard to guidelines for initial inspections, a number of CD documents on national trial inspections have highlighted the need for such guidelines. We agree that they are needed and work should be undertaken to develop such guidelines.

The work programme also addresses the order of destruction, technical criteria such as production capacity and thresholds, and guidelines for schedule 1. As noted in the Wyoming joint statement, the United States and Soviet Union have agreed on some procedures governing the order of destruction of chemical weapons negotiations. Our approach will be introduced into the CW negotiations very soon.

The United States has tabled papers on the issues of production capacity and thresholds and has participated in the development of the production capacity paper now in appendix II. We believe this material is a useful basis

(Mr. Ledogar, United States)

for discussion. We also hope for progress on the guidelines for schedule 1, but note that it is difficult to finalize such guidelines until the scope of schedule 1 is agreed.

Another important area of the work programme is the question of amendments. Much work must be done before agreement can be reached on procedures for amending the convention. We must also find ways to change less fundamental aspects of the convention by a mechanism less formal than an amendment procedure.

As I mentioned earlier, a number of the remaining issues are the most difficult, of great importance to all delegations and directly linked to the effective operation of the convention. Two such issues on our agenda this year - challenge inspection and the Executive Council - have eluded solutions for years. While we have made some progress in narrowing the focus on the unresolved aspects of these issues, much work remains to be done to meet the needs and concerns of all parties.

I have spent some time trying to outline the progress made to date on CW because I believe it is important for all of us to not lose sight of the substantial work that has been accomplished. At the same time, we still have some of the most thorny issues ahead of us. We must not slacken our pace, but we must continue to take the time required to develop provisions that will create a durable and universal convention that will enhance security while ridding the world of a class of weapons we all regard as abhorrent.

Thank you, Mr. President and colleagues, for bearing with me while I have attempted to share my thoughts and hopes with you. I can promise that you will always find my delegation candid and direct in explaining our position, and always ready to roll up our sleeves and work hard with you toward the vital goals of this Conference.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of the United States of America for his statement, and for the kind words he addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the representative of Indonesia, Ambassador Loeis.

Mr. LOEIS (Indonesia): Mr. President, I would like to preface my statement by associating myself with previous speakers who have congratulated you on your taking up the post of President of the Conference for the month of February. It is indeed a source of satisfaction to the Indonesian delegation to see the representative of a country with which Indonesia has very close relations presiding over our deliberations. I also wish to pledge the preparedness of my delegation to fully co-operate with you in the dispatch of our common duties. Let me also avail myself of this opportunity to express the appreciation of my delegation to your predecessor, Ambassador El Ghali Benhima of Morocco, for his commendable chairmanship of the Conference during the month of August 1989 and in the inter-sessional period.

It is a great pleasure for my delegation to have the distinguished Foreign Minister of China, His Excellency Qian Qichen, among us today. His important statement has enriched our deliberations, since he touched upon

(Mr. Loeis, Indonesia)

many of the issues under discussion in this Conference. I would also like to join previous speakers in warmly welcoming to the Conference Ambassador Andrea Negrotto Cambiaso of Italy, Ambassador José Pérez Novoa of Cuba, Ambassador Hou Zhitong of China, Ambassador Mitsuro Donowaki of Japan, Ambassador Gerald Shannon of Canada, Ambassador Roberto García Moritán of Argentina, Ambassador Horacio Arteaga of Venezuela, Ambassador Stephen Ledogar of the United States of America, Ambassador Miguel Marín Bosch of Mexico, Mr. Zdenek Pagac of Czechoslovakia and Dr. Gheorghe Chirila of Romania. My delegation looks forward to continued co-operation with the delegations now under their respective heads. At the same time, to those Ambassadors who have recently concluded their functions in the Conference, I would also like to wish all success in their future undertakings. My delegation would also like to join other delegations in expressing distress and sorrow at the untimely loss of Miss Annie Rebuzzi.

The Conference on Disarmament this year starts its spring session at a watershed where great changes in international relations have just begun. The growing disposition toward conciliation and accommodation among States, especially between the major Powers, appears to be a promising realism, easing international tension in many parts of the world. I am persuaded that the long and most aggravating chapters in East-West relations are drawing to a close. The contrast with the sombre, even despairing mood of disarmament efforts in the past is striking, since the road blocks which for many years now have impeded passage on the way to disarmament seem to have been removed.

It has come to our attention that an agreement between the super-Powers on 50 per cent cuts in strategic weapons is under way, and an agreement on the reduction of conventional armed forces in Europe is expected to materialize this year. Moreover, quite a number of countries in both East and West - including the two super-Powers - are now taking unilateral steps to restructure their military forces with a view to reducing military tension in Europe.

In the multilateral disarmament forums, however, progress is still too slow to record any measure in curbing the arms race, particularly the nuclear arms race.

In pursuit of a de-escalation of the nuclear arms race, no measure would have such a decisive impact as a comprehensive ban on nuclear weapon testing. Despite all the solemn reaffirmations of obligations stipulated in the existing treaties, no tangible result has been forthcoming in attaining this paramount objective. Efforts to conclude a treaty to comprehensively ban nuclear testing have been obstructed on political and technical grounds and, at this Conference, consideration of this issue has long been blocked by procedural difficulties. It is regrettable, therefore, that our deliberations on one of the priority items of the Conference for over a decade has not produced any result.

In spring 1989 my delegation questioned how the Conference had been able to set up an Ad hoc Committee on item 1 in 1982-1983 but had failed to do so in 1988 and 1989, when the world political climate showed a degree of improvement. I believe this question is still cogent. Today, when new

(Mr. Loeis, Indonesia)

political ideas surface and concordance has gradually overruled confrontation, there should be no impediment preventing the Conference from setting up a Committee with a mandate to negotiate a treaty to comprehensively ban nuclear testing.

We have acknowledged in the past that negotiations to draw up a comprehensive nuclear test-ban treaty have not been possible due to the inadequacy of the state of the art of verification. We were told that tests are needed to ensure the reliability of the existing arsenals. Now I am wondering if these two assertions are going to be elucidated to take the following into account. Firstly, the great strides which have been made in science and technology could, in my view, erase any technical impediment in monitoring compliance with a comprehensive nuclear test-ban treaty. Secondly, the leaders of the super-powers have professed recently that the two States are entering a new era of relations. For this reason, I doubt that there is still the necessity for them to ensure the reliability of their existing nuclear arsenals. As just pointed out by Ambassador Marko Kosin of Yugoslavia in his statement, the heads of State or Government of non-aligned countries reiterated, inter alia, at their recently concluded summit meeting that "the immediate suspension and comprehensive ban on nuclear tests remained one of the highest priorities of nuclear disarmament". They further mentioned that the ongoing process of disarmament could be quickened and its coverage widened through the common endeavour of the entire international community. We should therefore tackle all aspects of the test ban issue in a concrete manner, because further procrastination could harm not only the cause of a comprehensive test ban but also confidence in the Conference on Disarmament as an effective multilateral disarmament body. In this respect, I wish to express the appreciation of my delegation to you, Mr. President, and to the Ambassador of Japan for having conducted consultations in search of a consensus on the mandate to establish a committee on agenda item 1.

Let me now turn to the chemical weapons issue, which has become the main preoccupation of the Conference to date. In his statement of 15 February 1990, Ambassador Ledogar of the United States, inter alia, introduced the United States-USSR joint statement and echoed the reaffirmation of President Bush's strong commitment to progress on the multilateral negotiations in order to conclude a chemical weapons convention soon. It is within this context that I would like to note with satisfaction the content of the joint statement and support the strong commitment made by the two super-Powers to multilateral negotiations to ban chemical weapons. Without their commitment, the Conference on Disarmament is unlikely to achieve progress on this particular item of our agenda.

I do not hesitate, therefore, to make use of this opportunity to appeal to all parties, and especially the super-Powers, to fully commit themselves to speed up the negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament on matters in which they have a particular interest, as well as on questions which concern almost all States participating in the negotiations. As they commit themselves to do so in the prohibition of chemical weapons, it is only just and fair to request them also to embark upon multilateral negotiations on those issues I mentioned earlier.

(Mr. Loeis, Indonesia)

The negotiations to totally ban chemical weapons during the 1989 session of the Conference on Disarmament, as well as the open-ended consultation recently concluded, have made considerable progress. Understanding in some aspects has been achieved, and divergences of views have been narrowed. We notice among other things that efforts to set up a verification régime under the convention to totally ban chemical weapons, as well as other matters pertinent to the smooth running of the convention, have persistently been expended by the Committee.

We are gratified to have been working with the scale of negotiations in the Committee and the wealth of ideas that delegations have submitted. The outgoing chairman of the Ad hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons, Ambassador Morel, as well as the chairmen of the five working groups, deserve our appreciation and gratitude for the able and creative manner in which they guided the negotiations last year. At the same time, however, if we reflect on the commitment entered into by the international community to comprehensively ban chemical weapons, then we are astonished to learn that one of the most crucial elements of the future convention, the prohibition of use of chemical weapons, is excluded from the Committee's mandate.

United Nations General Assembly resolution 44/115 B specifically urges the Conference to pursue as a matter of continuing urgency its negotiations on a convention on the prohibition of the development, production, stockpiling and use of all chemical weapons and on their destruction. The message is clear. The General Assembly has specifically stressed that the convention should include the prohibition of the use of chemical weapons.

The demand of the international community to ban chemical weapons results from the fear of the most dangerous consequences if such weapons were to be used. The great danger that chemical weapons pose to mankind is not the development, production or stockpiling of those weapons as such, but their possible use. Such a possibility will always exist as long as the development, production and stockpiling of these weapons are not totally eliminated. The prohibition and prevention of the use of chemical weapons therefore constitutes the core of the problem concerning the banning of chemical weapons, and should therefore be covered by the scope of the future chemical weapons convention.

Objections to the proposals to include use have been raised for a number of reasons. One of these suggests that the use of chemical weapons has been prohibited by the 1925 Geneva Protocol, and that there is no need to include such a prohibition in the future convention: another is that a new convention containing the same rules would weaken the instrument already in existence.

As we all know, the 1925 Geneva Protocol has a number of weaknesses. It conditionally bans the use of chemical weapons, and more than 40 States parties, among them all the great Powers, made reservations stating that they would not be bound by the convention vis-à-vis any State whose armed forces failed to abide by the Protocol. It also contains no mechanism to verify compliance, and it has been evident that it cannot totally prevent the use of these weapons. The effectiveness of the Protocol is therefore questionable, since it could be regarded as a "no first use" agreement.

(Mr. Loeis, Indonesia)

I now wish to refer to the question of the non-production of chemical weapons, a particular aspect of the convention which has been dealt with by international gatherings even during the preparation of the 1925 Geneva Protocol. Lengthy and painstaking negotiations on this question at that time finally resulted in the agreement which prohibits only the use of these weapons.

After the signing of the 1925 Geneva Protocol, subsequent activities unsuccessfully attempted to establish a régime for the regulation of the non-production of chemical weapons. Documentation on the elaboration of the 1925 Geneva Protocol and the negotiations to establish the future convention illustrate that it has always been possible to divert chemicals intended for peaceful purposes to weapon purposes.

Those exercises, as well as ours today, have shown the complexity of establishing a régime which could prevent any possible clandestine production of chemical weapons. Hence, if we wish to have a proper convention, the most viable way to prevent loopholes is the enforcement of a challenge inspection régime which could clear any doubts and which would disclose any act of non-compliance.

We notice that the essential elements necessary to arrive at concrete treaty language concerning the question of challenge inspection have been identified and discussed. They are now ready to be further negotiated in the Ad hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons. Challenge inspection, in my view, constitutes an ultimate source of confidence in the convention. It should be borne in mind, however, that recourse to it should be regarded as exceptional, and confidence in the convention should be built up, as far as possible, by other means which do not involve resort to an open expression of suspicion. An idea about verification measures based on an elaborate system of quotas has been tabled. This in my view, merits further consideration by the Ad hoc Committee, because the measure would grant the parties to the future convention the possibility of displaying their openness and their spirit of co-operation, thus reducing the need to conduct challenge inspections.

Some may recall that the question of strengthening the security of the non-nuclear-weapon States which have undertaken to renounce nuclear weapons was one of the central issues in the course of negotiations on the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. The resolution adopted by the forty-fourth United Nations General Assembly session stressed the urgent need for an international instrument to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons.

As a non-nuclear-weapon State, my country believes that the most effective guarantee against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons would be nuclear disarmament and the total elimination of nuclear weapons. Pending nuclear disarmament, all nuclear-weapon States should give an unconditional guarantee not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States. Negative security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States are, therefore, the least nuclear-weapon States could render in exchange for the commitment of non-nuclear-weapon States not to produce, acquire or possess nuclear weapons.

(Mr. Loeis, Indonesia)

During the 1988 and 1989 sessions of the Conference we noted that the Ad hoc Committee on Negative Security Assurances examined and discussed proposals for a common formula of assurances to be included in an international legally binding instrument, and proposals for interim arrangements. Options such as the establishment of a single common formula, the establishment of a common formula for each category of non-nuclear-weapon State and other possible alternatives have been discussed. Without prejudging the result, discussion could perhaps be resumed in the Ad hoc Committee to further elaborate the proposals. My delegation wishes to reiterate its readiness to continue the search for a common formula of assurances, particularly an international instrument of a legally binding nature.

Touching upon the question of nuclear-weapon-free zones, which is dealt with under agenda item 8, I wish firstly to state that my country's long-held position on this matter stands. The establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in our view constitutes a positive step in contributing to regional peace, security and stability by reducing the geographical areas within which nuclear weapons can operate. It can also make a significant contribution to nuclear disarmament, including the strengthening of the non-proliferation endeavour. A nuclear-weapon-free zone is a nuclear disarmament measure by means of which non-nuclear-weapon States can make a practical demonstration of their commitment to and pursuit of the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

Given the increasing climate of confidence in the present international situation, my delegation believes that the establishment of such zones in many parts of the world, including South-East Asia, should be encouraged.

We are now facing a challenging world where unprecedented changes in the international arena are taking place. Today, we can see the spirit of reconciliation and co-operation clearly emerging between the two military alliances, each of which, in the past, saw the other as a threat to its very existence. It is our task, therefore, to achieve lasting peace through disarmament and to continue to encourage the shift from confrontation to conciliation and co-operation.

In this respect, it is encouraging to note the requests emanating from many countries to participate as observers in the Conference. It is the expectation of my delegation that their participation will positively contribute to the discussions on resolving pending matters and steer the Conference in adapting to the changes under way outside this forum. Moreoever, we would also hope that their involvement in the negotiations would lead them to abide by any legally binding international instrument produced. Hopefully this would also pave the way to universal adherence to the instrument.

We have made efforts in the past to enhance the effective functioning of the Conference, inter alia, by re-establishing the informal Group of Seven. My delegation would support the re-establishment of the Group, which should be given the task of evaluating and making suggestions on what the Conference should do in response to the new developments. We should not be too slow, otherwise the credibility of the Conference on Disarmament as the single multilateral disarmament forum will be called into question and its very existence jeopardized.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Indonesia for his statement and for the kind words he addressed to the Chair. That concludes my list of speakers today. Does any other member wish to take the floor? It seems not.

I shall now proceed to suspend this plenary meeting and convene an informal meeting of the Conference to consider requests from non-members for participation in our work.

The meeting was suspended at 12 noon and resumed at 12.10 p.m.

The PRESIDENT: The 538th plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament is resumed.

As a result of the informal meeting that we have held today, I propose that we take a decision, as indicated in the note by the President which the secretariat has circulated today as document CD/WP.381, concerning three additional requests from non-member States to participate in the work of the Conference. Since no objections were raised at the informal meeting, I suggest that we now adopt this decision.

It was do decided.

The PRESIDENT: In connection with the decision just taken, I wish to declare for the record that the statement I made at the 534th plenary meeting of the Conference also applies to the requests that we have considered today.

I should like to announce that the Ad hoc Committee on Radiological Weapons will hold its first meeting of the present annual session on Thursday, 1 March at 3 p.m. in this Council chamber.

In the final part of the last plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament that I have the honour and pleasure to preside, I would like to share with you some observations as your outgoing President.

The Netherlands Government very much welcomed the opportunity afforded by the February 1990 presidency to be instrumental in getting things done, having our work organized without delay in an appropriate way. The Netherlands attaches great value to our unique multilateral negotiating forum. The renewed presence of the Netherlands Minister for Foreign Affairs at the opening day of our spring session bears witness to this strong commitment to the CD. In his statement Minister van den Broek outlined in clear terms the Netherlands views on the basic issues of disarmament today and how the Conference on Disarmament should respond to the challenges posed by the radical changes occurring in our world.

In order to express both the motives and the sentiments which have led me in discharging the responsibilities of the presidency, I think I can do no better than refer to that statement made by my Minister on 6 February 1990. You will bear with me if I quote a passage from that address which brings out our approach in no uncertain terms. Having referred to the events of the revolutionary year 1989, in which pluralist democracy and human freedom gained substantial ground, my Minister stated:

(The President)

"... the order of peace we are building involves a transition from a security relationship based on antagonism to one based on co-operation and trust. Its foundations are: respect for democratic values and human rights, peaceful resolution of conflicts and security based on mutual assurance rather than superior strength and threats."

These sentiments have very much inspired the Netherlands delegation throughout its tenure of the presidency.

Reviewing now the practical business the Netherlands presidency had to transact, I observe the following. As usual at the opening of the annual session, the Conference had to deal with a number of organizational questions, which are required to provide appropriate frameworks for our consideration of substantive questions. Bringing about an effective, verifiable, truly global convention bann g chemical weapons at the earliest date is a political priority. The sustained progress achieved in the negotiations in this multilateral body as well as in the bilateral rounds between the United States and the Soviet Union constitute a momentum in itself whose impact on our work on chemical weapons in the Conference on Disarmament cannot fail to be noticed.

In the Netherlands view it was vital to get the CW negotiations in 1990 started with a proper mandate as soon as possible. Establilshing an appropriate mandate was a complex issue in itself. I felt very encouraged, however, by the positive and flexible attitude taken by all delegations. I therefore welcome the substantial improvement achieved this year in the mandate of the Ad hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons. This is a major step forward after several years of work under the previous, more limited mandate. The participation of an unparalleled number of non-member States in our work on a CW ban holds great promise for the universality of this CW convention, indeed a foremost requirement. Combining all these factors, I submit that our chances for success in relation to the conclusion of the long-desired CW convention are better than ever. Indeed, the time has come to reap the fruits of our efforts.

In assessing the organization of work of the Conference during the month of February, I would like to note that early agreement was reached on the establishment of the Ad hoc Committees on Effective International Arrangements to Assure Non-nuclear-weapon States against the Use or Threat of Use of Nuclear Weapons and on Radiological Weapons. Their recently appointed Chairmen, Ambassadors Negrotto Cambiaso and Varga respectively, are now consulting on preparations for the sessions of those subsidiary bodies.

We have also held consultations in connection with the first part of agenda item 7, entitled "New types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons". Those consultations indicated that it would be advisable to keep this matter under review and to deal with it whenever necessary, possibly at informal meetings of the Conference.

I would like to stress the importance of the decisions taken on requests from non-members to participate in the work of the Conference. During the month of February, we took action on an unprecedented number of

(The President)

requests, 33 in all, a decision which, in my view, is a good augury for the development of our work. This is particularly the case in our negotiations on chemical weapons, in which all 33 States have been invited to participate. We are all aware of the outstanding contributions made by non-members in previous years and, as our negotiations on that subject intensify, I am sure that we shall continue to benefit from such participation.

The involvement of non-members in our activities represents a signficant step towards securing a universal process of participation in the elaboration and acceptance of any agreement concluded in the Conference. I hope that non-members will make full use of the opportunities afforded them for participation in our work. Except for decision-making, non-member States have been entitled to the same facilities as granted to the members of the Conference, including the right to make statements in plenary meetings and to submit written proposals or working documents on measures of disarmament that are the subject of negotiations in the Conference, participation in subsidiary bodies established by the Conference under items on the agenda, as well as in informal meetings devoted to such questions.

As the practice of the Conference has developed, non-members have also participated in informal consultations held in subsidiary bodies, and furthermore they have assumed responsibility for the chairmanship or co-ordination of certain groups. I am sure that on this basis, non-members are able to contribute as much as members to the success of our work and I would like, at this stage, as I have done in a number of cases privately, to encourage non-members to participate in all aspects relating to the agenda items that they have chosen, by obtaining assistance from experts in those technical matters facing us, whenever necessary.

As I have had occasion to point out before, the Conference is a specialist body, engaged in the negotiation of agreements of universal scope. The fact that by now there are, in all, 73 members and non-members taking part in the work of the Conference augurs well for our efforts to achieve universally acceptable agreements. In making this comment, I have in mind of course, first of all, the negotiations on the prohibition of chemical weapons. As I said, our chances for success in the conclusion of a CW convention are better than ever. I said so with reference to external factors. But there is also an internal element of encouragement: the fact that the stewardship over the ad hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons is in the safe and trusted hands of Ambassador Hyltenius of Sweden and that the three working groups are being coached by such competent leaders as Mr. Lamazière of Brazil, Mr. Meerburg of the Netherlands and Mr. Krutzsch of the German Democratic Republic. I would like to express once more our full confidence in this most dynamic team to which we have entrusted the leadership over the CW negotiations.

I felt it my duty, immediately after the opening of the annual session, to renew, the presidential consultations on the question of a mandate for an ad hoc committee on agenda item 1, entitled "Nuclear test ban". These consultations are still going on. I take it that all delegations are aware of the high political relevance of these probings, especially this year. As I announced at the beginning of the session of the Conference this year,

(The President)

Ambassador Donowaki willingly agreed to continue the efforts of his predecessor, Ambassador Yamada, who, in the wake of his presidency of March 1989, initiated a dialogue in search of a consensus on the mandate for an ad hoc committee under agenda item 1. Since then, we have heard a number of plenary statements expressing strong support for the worthy efforts being made by the leader of the Japanese delegation. According to Ambassador Donowaki, the dialogue conducted by his predecessor and himself on an informal and individual basis proved to be encouraging. It has been found that a great number of delegations indeed wish to start substantive work on nuclear testing issues in the Conference. Also, on an individual and informal basis, Ambassador Donowaki confirmed the conviction of his predecessor that the draft mandate contained in document CD/863 could be used as a starting-point to formulate a consensus. It is my wish that delegations would show readiness to pursue all avenues in order to disentangle ourselves from an impasse and arrive at a solution. We know that we are close to a consensus on the text of the mandate so that the Ad hoc committee can start its work as early as possible.

The calender has it that February is a short month for transacting business in the Conference. Consultations are under way on the re-establishment of an ad hoc committee under agenda item 5, entitled "Prevention of an arms race in outer space". The Conference will also keep under review the appropriate organizational framework to deal with agenda items 2, entitled "Cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament", and 3, "Prevention of nuclear war, including all related matters". Consultations will further continue on two matters which are not part of our annual agenda but which have been under consideration for a number of years, that is, expansion of the membership of the Conference and its improved and effective functioning. While these are not easy subjects, I am convinced that the diplomatic skill and experience of Ambassador Azikiwe will be assets in our further discussion of them. I wish him a successful outcome to his endeavours.

Nobody can or will deny that no effort should be spared in striving for the improved and effective functioning of the Conference on Disarmament. This is not only a technical subject, although we should continue to rationalize the work of the Conference. We also face a highly political matter, as both the agenda and the organizational arrangements must respond to international developments outside the Conference on Disarmament. Organizational arrangements do not have an intrinsic value. They should keep pace with political conditions. The way of dealing with the various items on the agenda - either through negotiations or through pre-negotiations - should reflect the degree of political maturity of the subject-matter concerned. This does not, of course, preclude our consideration of all other items on the agenda or the inclusion of new items as a result of international developments.

Another element for consideration is the question of how far our present working structure of geopolitical groups is still relevant in view of the rapid changes that we are witnessing on the international political scene.

(The President)

I sum up: I submit that the work of the CD should be governed by a thorough sense of realism. Therefore, the CD should take into account the exciting events which are occurring almost daily and which cannot leave our work in the CD unaffected. Indeed, the chances for a convergence of views and the conclusion of agreements concerning multilateral disarmament are greater than ever.

I have no other business for today. I shall now adjourn this plenary meeting. The next plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament will be held on Thursday, 1 March, at 10 a.m.

The meeting rose at 12.30 p.m.